

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 251400Z AUG 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3116
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AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
USCINCEUR
DIA WASH DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 6151

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EAIR, GR, TU
SUBJ: GREEK-TURKISH AEGEAN AIR SPACE TALKS

REF (A) ATHENS 6980 (B) ANKARA 6126

1. SUMMARY: IN APPROACHING ATHENS AIRSPACE TALKS
AUGUST 28, TURKS ARE IN CAUTIOUS MOOD AND UNWILLING
TO BE CHARACTERIZED AS EITHER OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC.
ON SECURITY SIDE, TURKS HAVE PROPOSED AUTOMATIC
COMPUTERIZED CROSS-TELL SYSTEM OF NOTIFICATION ON
AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS IN AREA AND ARE PUZZLED BY
GREEK INSISTENCE ON LESS EFFICIENT MANUAL SYSTEM.
ON CIVILIAN SIDE, TURKISH ASSESSMENT WAS SIMILAR
TO THAT IN ATHENS REFTEL, NAMELY THAT CONSIDERABLE
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PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE AT THE EARLIER ISTANBUL
TALKS ON THE TECHNICAL ISSUES OF RESTRICTED AREAS
AND AIR CORRIDORS. END SUMMARY.

2. TURHAN FIRAT, DIRECTOR OF THE NEW MFA DEPARTMENT
OF AIR AND SPACE ISSUES, AUGUST 25 GAVE EMBOFFS A
RUDNOWN ON TURKISH POSITIONS IN REGARD TO THE

TECHNICAL-LEVEL AEGEAN AIRSPACE TALKS OPENING IN ATHENS AUGUST 28. HIS BRIEFING WAS LESS DETAILED THAN THAT CONTAINED IN ATHENS REFTEL, BUT IN MOST RESPECTS DID NOT SEEM INCONSISTENT WITH GREEK MFA DESCRIPTION OF THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES AT THE PREVIOUS TALKS IN ISTANBUL.

3. FIRAT SAID THERE WERE BASICALLY TWO CATEGORIES OF ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION: MILITARY AND CIVILIAN. THE MILITARY ISSUE WAS SIMPLY A QUESTION OF SECURITY, AND THE NEGOTIATORS WERE LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE BEST SECURITY FOR BOTH COUNTRIES. THE BASIC QUESTION WAS HOW BEST TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON AIRCRAFT ACTIVITIES IN THE AEGEAN REGION. THE TURKISH SIDE HAD PROPOSED AN AUTOMATIC CROSS-TELL SYSTEM THROUGH A COMPUTER HOOKUP BETWEEN THE NATO NADGE RADARS OF BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY. GREECE WAS INSISTING ON A MANUAL SYSTEM OF NOTIFICATION. FIRAT EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT AT GREEK RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT THE TURKISH PROPOSAL WHICH THE TURKS CONSIDER MORE EFFICIENT (COMMENT: A FULLER DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE IS CONTAINED IN ANKARA 6126).

4. ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE, FIRAT INDICATED THAT THE PROBLEMS WERE PRIMARILY TECHNICAL. ONE GROUP OF ISSUES CONCERNED THE ABOLISHMENT OF DANGEROUS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PROHIBITED ZONES, AS WELL AS RESTRICTION OF THE LIMNOS TERMINAL MOVEMENT AREA (TMA). THE TWO SIDES HAD MOVED FORWARD ON THESE ISSUES AT ISTANBUL AND REACHED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE. PERMANENT DANGEROUS AND PROHIBITED AREAS WOULD BE RESTRICTED TO THE TERRITORIAL AIRSPACE OF BOTH SIDES; IF EITHER SIDE WISHED TO DECLARE A TEMPORARY RESTRICTION, IT WOULD BE FOR A SPECIFIC AND TEMPORARY PERIOD AS ENVISAGED IN ICAO REGULATIONS. REGARDING THE LIMNOS TMA, TURKEY WAS INSISTING THAT IT BE RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE TO ICAO REGULATIONS TO WITHIN 5 TO 10 NAUTICAL MILES OF THE TERMINAL. (HE WAS RATHER VAGUE ON THIS POINT.) THE SECOND GROUP OF CIVILIAN ISSUES CONCERNED AIR CORRIDORS. IT WAS, HE SAID, A VERY TECHNICAL MATTER, BUT HE INDICATED THAT SOME PROGRESS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE. ASKED IF THE TECHNICIANS WERE DISCUSSING THE WIDTH OF THE TERRITORIAL AIRSPACE, FIRAT SAID THERE WAS NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT. TURKEY SIMPLY WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY EXPANSION OF THE PRESENT SIX-MILE AIRSPACE.

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5. REGARDING THE FIR LINE, FIRAT SAID TURKEY RECOGNIZED GREECE'S TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITIES, BUT WAS INSISTENT THAT GREECE NOT EXPLOIT ITS TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. HE ADDED THAT TURKEY WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE FIR LINE ITSELF. ASKED IF TURKEY WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE PRESENT FIR LINE IF THE TECHNICAL AND SECURITY QUESTIONS IN THE AEGEAN COULD BE RESOLVED TO TURKEY'S SATISFACTION, FIRAT SAID THAT FIRST AGREEMENT SHOULD BE REACHED ON THE MATTERS PRESENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION, AND THEN TURKEY WOULD EVALUATE THE SITUATION. HE ADDED, SOMEWHAT CRYPTICALLY, THAT EVERYTHING WAS INTERRELATED. ASKED FOR HIS OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PROSPECTS FOR THESE TALKS, FIRAT SAID HE WANTED TO BE OPTIMISTIC, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT PREDICT HOW THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT COME OUT.

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6. 6. ON A RELATED MATTER, FIRAT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE

TECHNICAL-LEVEL TALKS ON THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF ISSUES THAT WERE TO HAVE BEEN HELD BEFORE THE NEXT SECGEN-LEVEL MEETING HAD NOT YET BEEN SCHEDULED. HE INDICATED THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD MADE ANY MOVE TO ARRANGE SUCH TALKS, AND THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THEY WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE ATHENS SECGEN-LEVEL TALKS. HE CHARACTERIZED CONTINENTAL SHELF ISSUES AS 100 TIMES MORE COMPLEX THAN AIR ISSUES.

7. THE TURKISH DELEGATION FOR THE ATHENS AIRSPACE TALKS WILL BE ANNOUNCED TODAY. WE UNDERSTAND THE DELEGATION WILL BE HEADED BY RESAT ARIM WHO HAS RECENTLY TAKEN AMBASSADOR KORKUD'S PLACE AS MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR MULTILATERAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS. SINCE JANUARY OF THIS YEAR ARIM HAS BEEN DIRECTOR OF THE MFA DEPARTMENT ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, BUT HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN AEGEAN PROBLEMS.
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